



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

two elements, each unknowable by itself. And so everywhere. That, in fact, is the true doctrine of the relativity of knowledge; nothing known except relatively to something else—except in the relation of cause and effect.

The fatal error of agnosticism consists in seeing only one half of this truth. From Kant downward it has always assumed that phenomena—effects by themselves—were fully known; but that causes—especially the conscious self and the Infinite Cause—lay wholly beyond the limits of knowledge. We have followed this assertion through all the processes of thought, and we now know it to be altogether arbitrary and one-sided. The true law of nescience is wider but less baleful than this. The Infinite Cause, the whole universe of effects—each of these is equally unknowable out of relation to the other. But human progress has always consisted, and ever will consist, in an advancing knowledge of both, through their mutual relation.

CRITIQUE OF KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY.¹

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF PROF. DR. KUNO FISCHER, BY W. S. HOUGH.

CHAPTER I.

The Kantian Philosophy as Doctrine of Knowledge.

In order to undertake a criticism of the Kantian philosophy, it will be necessary, first of all, to review briefly its fundamental principles, and allow every distorted or false view which would destroy the conception of the system to give place to the accurate and true one. For one can only justly criticise what one has

¹ It should perhaps be mentioned that this "Critique," as well as being published separately under the above title ("Kritik der Kantischen Philosophie," Munich, Fr. Bassermann, 1883), also appears in Vol. V of Kuno Fischer's "Geschichte der neuern Philosophie," as an "Introduction to the History of Post-Kantian Philosophy," it being a brief *résumé* of the two preceding expository volumes on Kant, together with the author's criticism of the Kantian doctrines. It is, then, strictly speaking, a *Critical Exposition*. In quoting from Kant, Prof. Fischer has made use of Hartenstein's *first* edition. (Leipzig, Leop. Voss, 1838.)—Tr.

rightly understood. And from a critical knowledge of the system there follows the establishment of those new problems contained in it which determine the course of the development of post-Kantian philosophy. We shall proceed, therefore, from the characterization of the Kantian doctrines to their criticism, and then deduce the problems which have led to their transformation and development.

The Kantian philosophy in its entirety is seen to unite in itself, if we keep the main point in view, three fundamental features, which must be rightly conceived and rightly combined if we are to appreciate the full peculiarity of the nature of this philosophy which swayed the last century: they are *Doctrine of Knowledge*, *Doctrine of Freedom*, and *Doctrine of Development*. Its new doctrine of knowledge conditions its new doctrine of freedom, and both condition its new doctrine of development. These themes are arranged in the order in which they follow one another in the course of the critical investigation.

The first problem, and that which determines all the fundamental questions of the Kantian inquiry, is concerned with the origin of human knowledge. There is no simpler expression with which to designate Kant's ground-problem, and at the same time the criterion which guided him in its solution, and which furnishes us the best means of keeping our bearings in reference to the nature and method of his system. That *this* problem was never fairly recognized, not to say solved, before Kant, we have shown sufficiently in detail in our characterization of the epoch of Critical philosophy and the pre-Kantian standpoints to be able to refer the reader to that earlier discussion.¹

1. THE DOCTRINE OF PHENOMENA.—TRANSCENDENTAL IDEALISM.

1. *The Origin of Phenomena.*

If light is to be thrown upon the origin of human knowledge, those conditions must be investigated which precede it, which, consequently, must be contained in the faculties of our intellectual nature, but which are not yet knowledge itself. The philosophers before Kant, some with full intention, others with complete self-deception, presupposed these conditions, and thus treated the ex-

¹ Vid. Fischer: "Geschichte der neuern Philosophie," vol. iii, pp. 3-38.

planation of human knowledge dogmatically. They consequently failed of the solution, and in the very matter of importance attained nothing. Hence the problem had to be reformed, and so taken that the factors or conditions of knowledge were sought by a new investigation of human reason along that path which Kant called *critical* or *transcendental*. Knowledge is unexplained as long as its origin remains obscure. This obvious proposition is valid not only in reference to knowledge, but also in reference to every object of knowledge; for to know an object means as much as to understand its origination. Hence there can be no talk about a knowledge of objects as long as their origin remains unknown. The inquiry concerning the origin of human knowledge necessarily coincides, therefore, with that concerning the origin of our *objects of knowledge*, or of things knowable to us. All our objects of knowledge are, and must be, *phenomena*, which we represent to ourselves in thought; nor does it here come immediately at all into question whether the nature of things reveals itself in phenomena adequately or inadequately, or not at all. The inquiry concerning the origin of our objects of knowledge is accordingly identical with that concerning the origin of phenomena, or of the phenomenal world—*i. e.*, that body of phenomena which appear to the human reason as such, or which we all conceive and experience in a common way. The content of these phenomena is our *world of sense*. That we have and conceive such a common world of sense may be regarded as an established and uncontroverted fact; and this common world would be impossible if we were not compelled to conceive things in a common manner, or according to the same laws. The inquiry concerning the origin of human knowledge is thus seen, as soon as it is taken up seriously and thoroughly, to involve the inquiry concerning the origin of the sense-world, or of that idea of the world common to us all. The problem of knowledge cannot be reformed, and the conditions involved in its process investigated, without stating the question in the manner just developed. Just as we can rightly contemplate the world of stars only after we have won that point of view from which the situation and motion of our own earth become apparent, so we can rightly apprehend and estimate the world of sense only when we have attained an insight into the standpoint and activity of our knowing reason. The *Critical* or *Transcend-*

ental point of view in philosophy corresponds to the *Copernican* in astronomy.

If we ourselves create an object, its origination is as intelligible to us as our own activity, and the object itself is consequently completely knowable. If, on the other hand, there is that contained in the object which has and retains the character of something *given*, something which we cannot produce, or which cannot be reduced to our creative activity, then our knowledge will come at this point upon an impenetrable barrier. The objects of our knowledge are, therefore, just as far completely knowable as they are our *products*—*i. e.*, just as far as we are capable of creating them and of making the process of this creation clear to our consciousness; *only* so far does the knowableness of things extend. Accordingly, the inquiry concerning the origin of our knowledge and its objects, the sum-total of which constitutes our common world of sense, is more exactly to be taken, so that under the term “origin” shall be understood *creation* by the factors or capacities of our reason. If our sense-world is the product of our reason, it is also the completely intelligible object of our reason; it is this object *only as far* as it is this product. “For one thoroughly comprehends only what one can himself completely produce according to notions.”¹

2. *The Ideality of Phenomena.*

Now, Kant has shown that there is *an element* in all our phenomena which has and retains the character of something given—namely, our *impressions* or sensations. These, however, as such, are not yet objects or phenomena, but only the material out of which objects and phenomena arise in accordance with the laws of our thought, or through the form-giving power of our perception and understanding. Thus the sense-world originates from the material of our impressions, which are so moulded and combined, in accordance with the necessary and involuntarily fulfilled laws of our thought, that we all conceive the same natural order of things. The laws of thought are the ground-forms of perception and understanding—space, time, and the categories. The involuntary or unconscious fulfilment of these laws takes place through

¹ Kant: “Kritik der Urtheilskraft,” ¶ 68. (“Werke,” vol. vi, p. 258.) Cf. Fischer: “Geschichte der neuern Philosophie,” vol. iv, p. 483.

the imagination, while the knowledge of them is a matter of critical inquiry.

Since the laws of thought make phenomena and experience, they must precede the latter, and are, therefore, not given empirically and *a posteriori*, but *a priori*, or transcendently; they are the forms, the sensations, on the contrary, the stuff or matter of all phenomena. This matter is received by our reason; it is given to it, not produced by it; therefore it is not *a priori*, but *a posteriori*. Yet one may not say that our impressions are given *a posteriori* or *empirically*. This inexact and incorrect expression utterly confounds the Kantian doctrine. What we draw from experience, or what is given by experience—this is a *posteriori* or *empirical*. Kant expressly teaches: "That which is borrowed merely from experience is known only *a posteriori* or empirically."¹ Now, it appears that since impressions constitute the matter of all phenomena and experience, they belong to the conditions and elements of experience, hence are contained in it, but not produced by it; they do not result from experience, but experience from them. That is empirical which is given to us through experience. Now, sensations are the material of experience, and are, therefore, given for it, not produced by it. Kant explicitly says: "Perception which is related to an object through sensation is *empirical*."² An empirical object presupposes sensation. Although this relation is self-evident, it is still very necessary to enforce a correct conception of it, since one is countless times obliged to read: Kant taught that the form of our knowledge is given *a priori*, the matter *a posteriori* or empirically. If so, Kant must have contradictorily taught that the matter *for* experience is given *by* experience! Then he has not explained experience, but, like his predecessors, presupposed it; then the ground of sensations must be sought in experience; then the thing-in-itself lies hidden in phenomena; then the Kantian philosophy is completely inverted and stands head downward.

Since our sense-world consists only in phenomena, it is throughout *phenomenal*. Since the matter of all phenomena consists in sensations, their form in perceptions and notions, the elements of the same are through and through subjective; their material and

¹ Kant: "Kritik der reinen Vernunft." Introd., III, note. ("Werke," vol. ii, p. 39.)

² Id., "Transc. Æsth.," ¶ 1 (p. 59, *et seq.*).

formal constituents are contained in our knowing reason, and have the character of ideas¹ (the word is taken in the broadest sense). Hence all our phenomena are ideas; they consist in being mentally represented, and are throughout *ideal*. This doctrine of the ideality of all phenomena, and of their origination from our sense-states and forms of reason, is called *Transcendental Idealism*.

All phenomena are in time; the external are also in space. If they contained anything which was independent of our ideas, and which was nevertheless in space and time, the latter could not be the ground-forms of our ideas, hence not pure perceptions. Since, now, space and time are pure perceptions and nothing real in themselves, everything in space and time must be through and through ideal. The being of all objects in space and time consists in their being mentally represented. From the Kantian doctrine of space and time there follows, therefore, the doctrine of the ideality of all phenomena: the "Transcendental Æsthetic" founds that transcendental idealism which characterizes Kant's entire doctrine of knowledge.

Because space and time are the forms of perception of our reason, the pure space-and-time-magnitudes, and hence—since there are no other magnitudes—pure magnitudes in general, are the products of the perceptive or constructive activity of our reason, and as such they are completely knowable. The doctrine of magnitudes or pure mathematics has, therefore, before all other theoretical sciences, the character of a perfectly evident and purely rational knowledge. It was this fact which led Kant to declare "that in each of the natural sciences precisely as much exact science can be found as there is mathematics."²

¹ The German here is *Vorstellung*. The rendering given (idea) is retained in all similar references throughout, as being, perhaps, on the whole, the most satisfactory. The verbal noun *Vorstellen*, as in "*Gesetze unseres Vorstellens*," and like expressions, is uniformly rendered "thought." In such connections the word is used by Prof. Fischer as comprehending perception and understanding—*i. e.*, as designating all finite thought, or all thought that is conditioned by space and time, and thus, from the critical point of view, as being co-extensive with theoretical, or scientific, or knowing reason. The verb itself, *vorzustellen*, has been usually rendered "to conceive," or "mentally represent." The reader will please carefully distinguish *idea* (*Vorstellung*) from *Idea* (*Idee*), which occurs later in the discussion.—TR.

² Kant: "Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaft. Preface." ("Werke," vol. viii, p. 444.)

A refutation of the "Transcendental *Æsthetic*" would affect the whole doctrine of transcendental idealism, and thereby the entire basis and character of the Kantian doctrine of knowledge, and the Critical philosophy in general. But a false interpretation is no refutation. We have now to concern ourselves with views which mistake the sense of the Kantian doctrine, and thus attack it with arguments which necessarily prove ineffectual.

II. OBJECTIONS TO THE "TRANSCENDENTAL *ÆSTHETIC*."

To the Kantian doctrine of space and time, as the two primitive perception-forms of our reason, two objections present themselves, one calling in question the primitive or *a priori* (transcendental) character of these two ideas, the other their *anthropological* character. The first denies the unconditional validity of mathematical, and especially geometrical, axioms, and makes the idea of space dependent upon empirical conditions; the second denies the anthropological origin and character of these fundamental perceptions, in order to be free to maintain their cosmological and universal validity. Since both objections lie so near the surface that it is impossible that Kant could have overlooked them, it will suffice to set the sense of his doctrine in a clear light in order to secure its foundations against these attacks.

1. *First Objection: The Relative Validity of Geometrical Axioms.*

Kant by no means teaches the unconditional validity of geometrical axioms, but one entirely dependent upon our idea of space. Why we have this, and not some other space-perception; why our reason in general is thus, and not otherwise, organized—these questions Kant does not, it is true, leave untouched and uninvestigated, but yet unsolved; indeed, he explicitly declares them to be incapable of solution. According to his doctrine, we may regard the organization of human reason, and the space-perception it involves, as a *primitive fact*; but this may not be characterized as empirical, since experience is the product of reason, not its condition.

If there were beings possessing perception of space of only two dimensions, this perception would be for them a primitive fact, and in consequence they would just as necessarily be destitute of

the ideas of solids, as we must necessarily possess and cultivate those ideas. If it be true of plane surfaces, that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points in the surface, that between these two points there is only *one* such line, that two straight lines cannot inclose space, etc., these propositions would not be nullified by the fact that it is otherwise regarding the connection of two points upon the surface of a sphere, as, *e. g.*, the extremities of a diameter. That a definite space-perception is the luminous ground of knowledge from which certain insights follow, which *under this presupposition* are now and forever, *i. e.*, *apodictically*, valid—this was the fact which arrested the attention of Kant, and which he was only able to explain by regarding the original ground of all our ideas of space—space itself—as a ground-form of our thought, or as a fundamental perception of our reason.

The validity of our mathematical insights is, therefore, according to the explicit teaching of our philosopher, by no means unconditioned, but, on the contrary, absolutely dependent upon our space-and-time-perception. But under this presupposition it is apodictic in a way which no other sort of knowledge is. The character of knowledge changes with the change of its conditions. If we should substitute for our discursive understanding an intuitive one, and for our sensible perception an intellectual perception, knowledge would no longer follow the way of experience, but see and penetrate everything at a glance.¹ If we should substitute for our *external* space-perception—*i. e.*, the perception of space of three dimensions—some other, the character and compass of our mathematical ideas would change accordingly, but not the apodictical certitude of judgments based upon the corresponding construction and perceptive insight. This point contains the fact which at once characterizes and explains the nature of mathematics. Hence those objections which found upon another space-perception some other sort of geometry and its axioms are so little calculated to refute Kant's doctrine that they much more may and should appeal to it.

If it can be proved that 2×2 is not in *all* cases equal to 4, that in our perception of a plane surface a straight line does not in all

¹ Cf. *infra*, iii, 1, p. 25, *et seq.*

instances describe the shortest distance between two points, etc., then for the first time is Kant's doctrine refuted. To him pure mathematics seemed the only science in which knowing and creating, thought and object, were one and the same. Because pure magnitudes are constructions, or the products of perception, he regarded space and time as the perceptions of reason, or as the perceptive activity of reason itself. Because our notions of magnitude presuppose the perceptive or sensible knowledge of magnitude, he regarded space and time as the ground-forms of *sense*, not of understanding.

Even if these objections, which seek to base themselves upon the empirical origin of geometry, were stronger than they are, they would still prove ineffectual against the doctrine of the ideality of all phenomena, since they refer only to space, not to *time*. If time is a pure idea, or a form of perception, phenomena in time can contain nothing independent of all ideas. Now, *all* phenomena are in time, the objective as well as the subjective. But if objective phenomena are ideas, then space, since it contains all objective phenomena, can be nothing real in itself, but only the ground-form of our external perception. The transcendental ideality of time establishes the ideality of *all* phenomena, even that of *objective* phenomena, hence also that of space.

2. *Second Objection: The Uncritical View of the World.*

The objections which our common consciousness opposes to the systems of great thinkers are in their eyes generally the most insignificant of all, yet, because of the constant obstruction they offer to the comprehension and diffusion of these systems, they always prove themselves the most potent; for, like our feelings and sensations, they are not to be silenced with reasons, and are, as Schiller's "Wallenstein" says, "like the women, who always come back to their first word when one has preached reason for hours." Such an inflexible and uncritical way of thinking has always, among all the doctrines of Kant, found the most fault with the "Transcendental *Æsthetic*," since it maintains that space and time are mere perceptions of *human* reason, and nothing apart from the latter. Accordingly, as it seems, space and time can first appear in the world with our reason, hence with the existence of man, and can therefore neither be given before his origin, nor endure after him.

Now, we are obliged to conceive the human race as originated and as perishable, and yet we cannot possibly conceive the universe, which contains in itself the conditions of the origin as well as the destruction of the earth and its inhabitants, without space and time. It seems highly absurd, therefore, to seek to confine these two fundamental conditions of all natural existence to the organization and limits of human reason, as if it possessed and monopolized them. Kant himself, indeed, before introducing his new doctrine of the ideality of space and time, taught the mechanical origin and development of the cosmos, and the natural history of the heavens and of the earth, and its organic life. But with this view of the world as an historical development the idealistic doctrine of space and time appears to stand in the most open opposition. Surely Kant could not have been sensible of this contradiction, since he has nowhere made it the subject of especial discussion and explanation. Meanwhile the natural consciousness, which, with its ideas of space and time, finds the Kantian perfectly incomprehensible, is not disabused of its objections. Even an admirer and connoisseur of the Kantian philosophy, a man of remarkable and recognized acumen, was accustomed to shake his head at this doctrine, saying that it was utterly incomprehensible to him. But Kant's doctrine of space and time is the foundation of his doctrine of knowledge, and the way to his doctrine of freedom. Nothing, therefore, would remain of the Critical philosophy if *this* doctrine be rejected.

In fact, there is *no* contradiction between Kant's view of the world as a natural development in time and his "Critique of Reason." In the first place, both have different subjects of inquiry: that of the first is the explanation of the world, that of the second the explanation of knowledge. The problem of the explanation of the world is: How did the *world* in which we live originate according to natural and mechanical laws? The problem of the "Critique" is: How did this our *explanation of the world* originate according to the laws of our reason and thought? There the question is regarding the phenomena of nature, here regarding the knowableness of the same. These phenomena would not be phenomena, *i. e.*, they could not *appear* to us, if they were not intelligible and knowable. The entire fact of our idea of the world could not exist if natural objects were inconceivable or contained

anything inconceivable. And this would necessarily be the case if the elements of which they consisted were not determined by the character and conditions of our thought. Their matter is determined by the manifold of our impressions, which we receive by means of sense, and consequently regard as *given*; these impressions are the matter of phenomena. Their form is determined by the *laws* of our thought, which we regard as pure forms of reason, and the content of which Kant called pure reason; these laws constitute the form of phenomena. Phenomena, therefore, are through and through *ideas*. Phenomena, objects of experience, and the progressive Science of Experience, are all created from the matter of our sensations in accordance with the rational laws of our thought, the latter having partly the character of constitutive, partly that of regulative, principles. These laws determine the world of phenomena because they constitute it. They are, therefore, within the realm of phenomena, *world-conditions* or *world-principles*. But their meaning is entirely mistaken when only an anthropological or psychological validity is ascribed to them. They cannot be established by psychology, because they first make psychology itself possible. The Kantian "Critique of Reason" is no anthropological investigation.

And here those objections which our unscientific view of the world oppose to the Critical philosopher and his doctrine of space and time refute themselves. Space and time are the laws of perception imposed by our reason, and as such they determine the entire world of sense, because they first make it in general possible. Their cosmical or universal validity—which the natural sense so rightly demands and holds fast—is therefore so far from being disproved by the "Critique of Reason" that it is, the rather, thereby first really established. At the same time, however, this validity is limited in such a way that there may still be something independent of space and time, while the common consciousness, uncritical and thoughtless as it is, regards space as the huge box, and time as the vast stream, in which everything that is must be contained.

Man, as a natural individual, or as anthropology regards him, belongs to the phenomena of nature, and is a part of the world of sense. He is the result of a definite stage in the world's history—a stage which forms a link in the chain of world-changes, and

which presupposes a succession of earlier stages. That the origin and development of man must be regarded and investigated as natural, historical facts, Kant was so far from denying that he much more proposed to himself the thesis, and demonstrated by his criticism of reason, and more especially by his doctrine of space and time, that the necessity of its affirmation follows from the conditions of our knowledge. Natural, historical man is, therefore, by no means the sole proprietor of space and time; they are not dependent upon him, but he, like all phenomena in general, is conditioned by them. When space and time are called the pure perceptions of *human* reason, it is very essential to distinguish the sense in which this word is taken; it denotes man as the *knowing subject*, not as one of the objects of knowledge. As the subject of all knowledge—so far as we are capable of investigating the latter—our reason is the condition of all objects in general, or of the entire world of sense, in which in the course of time the natural human race appears and develops itself in a time-succession, which necessarily involves a preceding and a succeeding world. For all phenomena are in time; each has its time-duration, before and after which there is time, since they all originate and pass away, with the single exception of matter, which persists. But the knowing subject is not in time, but time in him, for it is the fundamental form of his sensuous thought.

If, on the other hand, space and time be regarded, with Schopenhauer, as the forms of perception of our intellect, and at the same time be declared to be animal functions of the brain, then there arises for the first time that absurdity which obviously describes a *circulus vitiosus*—viz., space and time are made dependent upon a condition, which, like the animal organism and the stages of nature and animal life preceding it, is itself only possible under the conditions of space and time. If the latter are, as Schopenhauer teaches, the "*principium individuationis*"—i. e., the ground of all multiplicity and diversity—they cannot possibly be, as, notwithstanding, Schopenhauer also teaches, the result and functions of individual organisms. Nor was Schopenhauer ever able successfully to explain away or to solve this erroneous circle, grounded as it is in a fundamental feature of his doctrine.

III. THE DOCTRINE OF THINGS-IN-THEMSELVES.

1. *The Sensuousness of Pure Reason.*

The knowing subject is not in space and time, but these in him ; hence the entire world in space and time is purely phenomenon or idea ; it is through and through phenomenal and ideal. This doctrine constitutes the Transcendental Idealism, which founds and characterizes the Kantian doctrine of knowledge. If, now, in the knowing subject there was nothing given, but, on the contrary, everything was *created* by it, the world of phenomena would be entirely its creation ; its notions would be immediate perceptions, its faculty of knowledge would consist in perceptive thought—*i. e.*, in an intuitive understanding, or in an intellectual perception, to which everything it creates appears at once as object or thing. Then knowing and creating would be completely identical, then there would be no difference between sense and understanding, perception and thought, objects and notions, phenomena and things-in-themselves.

Such a faculty of knowledge is not in itself impossible or inconceivable, but it is *not* the one we possess ; ours does not create things, but develops itself and its objects. Kant taught repeatedly, and indeed always, with the utmost explicitness, that our understanding is *discursive*, not intuitive, our perception *sensuous*, not intellectual. He accordingly carefully distinguished between sense and understanding, and explained human knowledge in such a way that it is from the matter of impressions and sensations, which have and retain the character of something given, that we produce phenomena, and the knowledge of phenomena, or experience.

Intuitive understanding is creative, and therefore divine ; but human understanding is not intuitive ; nor is it pure subject, for to the character of human reason, as Kant investigates it in his "Critique," there belongs *sensuousness*—*i. e.*, the capacity of receiving, and being sensible of, impressions, or of being affected by a manifold. Sense must not be identified with the organs of sense, which are its medium, nor with the definite sensations they convey, since they [the organs] belong to the constitution of the human body. Yet our sensations as such presuppose a faculty of sense or receptivity, which enables us to be affected by a manifold

of impressions, and without which the matter of knowledge would fail—*i. e.*, knowledge would remain empty, hence in general not exist at all. This sensuousness Kant ascribes to pure reason, since it is not, in the first place, a question of the sort of affections or the quality of impressions, but only of the capacity itself of receiving something given. Our reason must form and work up the given material, according to the laws of its perception and thought, into phenomena, experience, and empirical knowledge.

Our knowing reason would be creative, hence divine, if it were not *sensuous*—*i. e.*, capable of being affected by impressions, which it must receive, and which it can only combine and systematize. It is therefore not generative of the matter of knowledge, but merely *form-giving*, not creative, but *architectonic*. Since it does not make the matter of knowledge, but only receives it, it is receptive, and in this respect not original, but dependent. But the entire organization of its knowing faculty is conditioned by its sensuousness. Sense is one faculty, understanding another; this is receptive of material, that form-giving and productive; this is passive, that active; this receives impressions, that creates notions. Hence our perceptive faculty is not intellectual, but sensuous, our understanding not intuitive, but discursive—*i. e.*, it is obliged to take up its perceptions one by one, and proceed by connecting part with part, comparing perception with perception, and by uniting these to pass from perceptions to notions and judgments. Consequently the objects of our knowing reason are not entirely its own products; they are constructed out of matter and form; the former is given to it, the latter is given or added by it. Our knowledge of things (objects), therefore, consists in a gradual experience; it is not complete in an instant, but originates and develops itself. We are obliged to think objects in *succession*, and hence also in *co-existence*; since nothing would persist in a mere succession, thus also nothing could be thought. Space and time are therefore the fundamental conditions, or, since nothing can be thought without them, the *fundamental forms*, of our thought; they are, since every perception must be combined part by part, the fundamental forms of perception; and since our perceptive faculty is not intellectual, but sensuous, the fundamental forms of sense: in short, they are the *fundamental perceptions* of our reason.

With a creative or divine reason, knowing and creating, idea and thing, must be one and the same. It could be conditioned by neither space nor time. Our reason is distinguished from the divine by its sensuousness; with it, space and time are the necessary forms of all thought and of all knowledge. We ourselves are the only sensuous-rational beings which we know. Hence sensuous reason is equivalent for us to human reason. And thus, since *sense* belongs to the pure reason which Kant investigated in his "Critique," it was called by him—although the only reason knowable to us—*human* reason. Now, sense, as the capacity of receiving material, is of a dependent and derived nature. And this must be true of the entire organization and constitution of our knowing reason, since without sensuousness it would be an entirely different one from what it is.¹

Let us hear Kant himself. Quite at the beginning of the "Transcendental Aesthetic" he says: "The capacity of receiving ideas in the manner in which we are affected by objects I call *sense*. By means of sense, therefore, objects are given to us, and it alone furnishes us *perceptions*; objects are thought, however, by the understanding, and it is from the latter that *notions* arise." "The action of an object upon the faculty of representation—that is, so far as we are affected by it—is *sensation*. Perception which is related to an object through sensation is *empirical*. The indeterminate object of an empirical perception I call *phenomenon*. That in phenomena which corresponds to sensation I call the *matter* of phenomena; that, however, which makes it possible that the manifold of phenomena be disposed in certain relations I call the *form* of the same. Since that whereby sensations can alone be ordered and set in definite form cannot itself again be sensation,² so, although the matter of all phenomena is indeed given only *a posteriori*, the form of the same must, on the contrary, already lie *a*

¹ On the discursive and intuitive understanding. Cf. Fischer: "Gesch. d. n. Philos.," vol. iv, pp. 494–498.

² The liberty has been taken of correcting a probable oversight in quoting here, as it is of importance to the sense. Kant reads *Empfindung* (sensation), not *Erscheinung* (phenomenon), as given in the text of Prof. Fischer. Also in the following quotation, beginning "It is not necessary," etc., the recent edition of Benno Erdmann has been followed, instead of reading in the affirmative (It *is* necessary) with the edition from which Prof. Fischer quotes (vid. Note, p. 1), as the sense certainly substantiates the more modern reading.—Tr.

priori as an entirety in the mind, and, consequently, must be capable of being considered wholly apart from sensation.”¹ At the close of the “Transcendental Æsthetic” Kant says: “It is not necessary, either, that we limit perception in space and time to human sensibility. It may be that all finite thinking beings are necessarily like man in this respect (although that cannot be determined), yet it would not cease, even on account of this universality, to be *sense*, because it is a *derived* (*intuitus derivatus*), not an original (*intuitus originarius*), hence not an intellectual, perception. Such a perception seems, on the ground just brought forward, to belong only to the Primitive Being, not, however, to a being dependent as well in its existence as in its perception, which latter determines the relation of its existence to given objects. This last observation in our Æsthetic theory, however, must be made merely as an explanation, not as anything fundamental.”²

2. *The Thing-in-itself.*

Our knowing reason is accordingly not creative in reference to the matter of all phenomena and knowledge, but merely receptive. It receives this matter in virtue of its sensuousness; hence the latter is dependent and conditioned. And here arises the necessary inquiry concerning the *origin* of our impressions or sensations. Since these are the material which our faculties of knowledge mould and form, they cannot themselves proceed from the latter, but are rather the necessary conditions by which these faculties are aroused and set into activity. And, since they constitute the matter of all phenomena, we cannot derive them from phenomena without falling into the erroneous circle of first deducing phenomena from impressions, and then impressions from phenomena. Indeed, they can in no way originate from the world of sense, since the sense world first arises from them. From this it appears that the *origin* of our sensations is not itself a phenomenon, and hence does not constitute a knowable object. It is the subject of necessary inquiry, but not that of knowledge. It is something which precedes and lies at the basis of all experience, but which itself can never be felt, conceived, nor experienced. This unknown

¹ Kant: “Kritik d. r. Vernunft. Transc. Elementarlehre,” Part I, § 1. (Werke, vol. ii, pp. 59, 60.)

² Ibid., p. 86, *et seq*

and unknowable object is that transcendental *X* which the Kantian doctrine must necessarily have met in the course of its inquiry beyond, or, better said, within the limits of human reason.

We are thus obliged to posit as the cause of the impressions we receive something which lies at the basis of sense, and hence at the basis of the whole constitution of our knowing reason ; hence, also, at the basis of all phenomena and the entire sense-world. But precisely on this account it cannot itself be anything sensible, cannot be a phenomenon, cannot be an object of knowledge. This "supersensible substratum" Kant calls *Thing-in-itself*, designating thereby that transcendental *X* which the "Critique of Reason" introduces, and which it sees itself, on the grounds pointed out, obliged to introduce into its calculation. It is called thing-in-itself in distinction from all phenomena. If our reason were not sensuous, but divine, not receptive, but creative, then its ideas would be things themselves, then there would be no difference between phenomena and things-in-themselves. Since, however, it *is* sensuous, space and time are the ground-forms of its perception, its objects of knowledge are phenomena, and these merely ideas, hence not things-in-themselves. Consequently, in the critical investigation of reason we must distinguish between phenomena and things-in-themselves with the utmost precision, regarding every attempt to unite the two as the cause of irremediable confusion.

Now, because the objects which relate themselves to the thing-in-itself, or the relations which the latter sustains, are so numerous and so unlike, we see why the thing-in-itself appears in Kant's teachings in so many and different references. For it is the supersensible substratum at once of our sensibility and of the whole constitution of our knowing reason ; hence it is the hidden ground of all phenomena, the objective as well as the subjective, and therefore the substratum of the entire sense-world. In reference to sense, which is merely receptive of the matter of knowledge, it functions as the matter-giving principle, or as the cause of our sensations. In reference to the constitution of our knowing reason in general, it is represented as the hidden ground of our mode of perception and thought, *i. e.*, as the cause of our perceiving and thinking, and mentally representing to ourselves objective and subjective phenomena. Since phenomena are in space and time and hence consist throughout in external relations, the thing-in-

itself is called, in distinction therefrom, “the *inner*, that which belongs to objects in themselves”—an expression which demands careful attention, lest the radically false impression be received that the thing-in-itself lies hidden somewhere *in* phenomena. The meaning rather is, that the thing-in-itself is not external, not related to another, hence not in space and time at all. Since all phenomena are empirical objects, the thing-in-itself is called in distinction therefrom “*the transcendental object*.” Since all phenomena are ideas, and not objects external to and independent of thought, the thing-in-itself functions as “*the true correlate* of our ideas.” And, since phenomena alone are objects of knowledge, the thing-in-itself denotes the bounds of our knowledge, and functions as “the *limiting notion* of our understanding. In all these manifold meanings we see no self-transforming Proteus, but one and the same thing, which the philosopher is obliged to exhibit in different forms according to the various relations which it sustains.

Let us take Kant’s own words. He says in the doctrine of space : “The transcendental notion of phenomena in space is a critical reminder that in general nothing which is perceived in space is a thing-in-itself, nor space a form of things, which might be in itself in some way peculiar to them, but that objects in themselves are for us, indeed, unknown, and what we call external objects are nothing other than pure ideas of our sense, the form of which is space, the *true correlate* of which, however—*i. e.*, the thing-in-itself—is thereby not known, nor can be known ; and for the latter no quest, likewise, is made in experience.”¹ “For the substantiation of this theory of the ideality of external as well as internal sense, hence of all objects of sense as pure phenomena, the observation may be of especial service, that everything in our knowledge which belongs to perception contains nothing except mere relations—namely, the places in a perception (extension), change of place (motion), and the laws according to which this change of place is determined (moving forces). What, however, is present in a place, or what beyond the change of place is occasioned in the things themselves, is not thereby given. Now, a thing-in-itself is not known through mere relations. Hence it is to be carefully noted that, since nothing save pure ideas of relation are given to

¹ Kant : “Krit. r. V. Transc. Æsth.,” § 3. (Werke, vol. ii, p. 68, *seq.*)

us through external sense, this also can contain in its idea only the relation of an object to the subject—and not “*the inner, that which belongs to the object in itself*.” With internal perception the conditions are the same.”¹

The substratum of our external and internal perception is also that of our external and internal phenomena, that of the constitution of our knowing reason in general, and of our sensibility and understanding; hence it is the ground of our special ideas as well as of our thought. Kant says: “That something which lies at the basis of objective phenomena, and which so affects our sense that it receives the ideas of space, matter, form, etc.—this something, regarded as noumenon (or, better, as transcendental object), might also be at the same time the subject of thought, although, through the mode in which our sensibility is thereby affected, we receive no perception of idea, will, etc., but only of space and its determinations. This something, however, is not extended, not impenetrable, not composite, since all these predicates belong only to sense and its perceptions, so far as we are affected by such (otherwise to us unknown) objects.”²

That we mentally represent objective and subjective phenomena, have sensibility and understanding, that we perceive and think—herein consists the organization of our knowing reason. We discover *that*, but not *why*, it is so and not otherwise constituted. To take Kant's own words again: “The notorious question concerning the community of thought and extension would consequently, if everything imaginary be excluded, amount to the following: *How is external perception*—namely, that of space (a filling of the same, form and motion)—*in a thinking subject in general possible?* But to this question it is impossible for any man to find an answer. And this gap in our knowledge can never be filled, but only in so far characterized that external phenomena be ascribed to a transcendental object which is the cause of this sort of ideas—an object, however, which we by no means know, nor of which we can ever obtain a notion. In all the problems that may arise in the field of experience, we treat these phenomena as objects in themselves, without troubling ourselves about the original ground of their possibility (as phenomena). If, however, we go

¹ Ibid., § 8, p. 83.

² Ibid., Tr. Dialektik: Krit. 2 Paralog.

beyond their limits, the notion of a transcendental object becomes necessary.”¹

The philosopher Eberhard, in Halle, who held that after the Leibnitzian doctrine of knowledge the Kantian “Critique of Reason” was unnecessary and superfluous, made the criticism upon the latter that it was not able to explain the matter of sense—namely, sensations—without things-in-themselves. “Choose which we will,” he says, “we come upon things-in-themselves.” Kant invalidates this stricture by at once affirming and correcting it. He replies: “Now, that is precisely the constant assertion of Criticism; only that it does not set the ground of the matter of sensuous ideas anew in things, as objects of sense, but in something supersensible, something which lies *at the basis* of sense, and of which we can have no knowledge. Criticism says: ‘Objects, as things-in-themselves, *give* the matter for empirical perceptions (they contain the ground for determining the representative faculty according to its sensuousness), but they *are* not that matter.’”²

In the sentence just cited, one may read word for word what every student of the “Critique” knows, and what astonishes no one—viz., that objects as things-in-themselves *furnish*, but not *are*, the matter of empirical perceptions—*i. e.*, sensations; they are its *cause*. Zeller very rightly says: “There can be no doubt that Kant always maintained an object in this sense, and derived sensible perception therefrom.” From Zeller’s preceding sentences it appears in what sense he takes “object” here. He understands by it, with Kant, “the transcendental object,” or “the thing-in-itself.”³ But a contemporary weekly anonymously informs its readers that, according to Kant, “things-in-themselves are not the cause of our sense-perceptions, also not the ground that sense-perceptions are possible for us, but the ground of objects, the importance of which for the possibility of experience means transcendental object.” The first assertion is absolutely false, and an evidence of the ignorance of the author; the second is perfectly senseless, and an evidence of confusion and prattling

¹ Ibid., “Betrachtung über d. Summe d. reinen Seelenlehre,” vol. ii, p. 696, *seq.*

² Vid. Kant: “Ueber eine Entdeckung, nach der alle neue Kritik der Vernunft durch eine ältere entbehrlich gemacht werden soll” (1790). Werke, vol. iii, p. 352.

³ E. Zeller: “Gesch. d. deutschen Philos. seit Leibnitz,” second edition, 1875, pp. 352, 353.

absurdity that characterizes the whole scribble. When the writer charges me with regarding the expressions "*transcendentales Object*" and "*transcendentaler Gegenstand*" as synonymous, and both as Kantian designations of the thing-in-itself, he simply displays his own ignorance of Kant's teachings.¹ When, however, he charges me with confounding "thing-in-itself" with "things external to me," the statement is a falsehood, since, following the precedent of the Critical philosophy, I always distinguish, and make it my care to distinguish, with the utmost exactness, between these two notions. It is indeed a fact unworthy closer attention, yet nevertheless curious, that a doctrine which Kant expressly declared to be "*the constant assertion of his 'Critique'*" should to-day be denied the Philosopher, and the senseless opposite ascribed to him. And this occurs even in a so-called prize-essay on Kant.²

In order to a just estimate and criticism of the Kantian philosophy, it is of vital importance that the doctrine of the thing-in-itself be understood in its origin and development as well as in its scope. It too commonly happens that it is falsely and one-sidedly taken, as when things-in-themselves are referred merely to the objects of knowledge or phenomena, and transferred to them, as if they were contained *in* them, like the kernel in the shell, only that they remain hidden from us as sentient beings. The Empiricists, who, like Bacon and Locke, granted the validity of no other than sensible knowledge, declared things-in-themselves to be unknowable, while the Rationalists, as Descartes and Leibnitz, held sense to be confused understanding, clear and distinct thinking, on the contrary, to be the true form of knowledge, and therefore things-in-themselves to be the true objects of knowledge. Then things-in-themselves and phenomena are the *same* objects; when perceived, they are things as they appear to us; when clearly and distinctly thought, on the contrary, they are things as they are in themselves. The same thing is, therefore, according to the way

¹ That is, the expressions in question *are* synonymous, and both used by Kant to designate the thing-in-itself; there is, then, no ground of criticism. The "senseless" clause referred to reads: "wohl aber [die Dinge an sich] sind der Grund Gegenstände, deren Bedeutung zur Möglichkeit der Erfahrung der transcendente Gegenstand heisst." The writer may possibly intend, . . . *leads them to be called* transcendental object.—Tr.

² Vid. "Grenzboten," No. 40 (1882), p. 12. Cf. K. Lasswitz: "Die Lehre Kant's von der Idealität des Raumes und der Zeit" (1883), p. 132, note

in which it is apprehended—whether by sense or by understanding, whether obscurely or distinctly—phenomenon or thing-in-itself. In precisely this confusion Kant saw the fundamental error of the Dogmatic philosophy, and especially that of its metaphysics. According to him, both the above notions are to be absolutely distinguished. The thing-in-itself is the supersensible substratum of phenomena, *because* it is that of our knowing reason, *because* it is that of our sensibility, which has, but does not create, sensations, and receives impressions, which can be caused neither by it itself nor by one of its objects.

CHAPTER II.

The Kantian Philosophy as Doctrine of Freedom.

I. KANTIAN REALISM AND IDEALISM.

It is not our purpose at this point to inquire whether the fundamental doctrines of Kant accord or discord with one another, whether, and in how far, they are uncontroverted, or indeed recognized as incontrovertible. We desire here simply to fix in mind that the recognition of the reality of things-in-themselves, and of their distinction from phenomena, is an essential part of those doctrines. This recognition is related to the doctrine of the ideality of phenomena, as the thing-in-itself to the latter, and it thus forms in the doctrinal edifice of Kant at once the substructure and the necessary completion of transcendental idealism. To deny or misapprehend the recognition of things-in-themselves and their differentiation from phenomena means to shake the foundations of the Critical philosophy. When the reality of things-in-themselves is indeed affirmed, but yet they are not properly distinguished from phenomena, there arises that confusion of both which constitutes the character and fundamental error of the *Dogmatic* philosophy. If there were merely things-in-themselves and no phenomena, all knowledge would be impossible. If there were merely phenomena and no things-in-themselves, the sense-world we conceive would be a *dream*—a dream common to us all, to be sure, and harmonious in itself, but yet a purely subjective image without actual ground or consistence. The knowableness of the world consists in its ideality, *i. e.*, in its being through and through capable of repre-

sentation in thought, and in its being so represented. This characteristic the Critical philosophy, as transcendental idealism, teaches and establishes. The reality of the world consists in that which lies at the basis of all phenomena—since at the basis of all ideas and all faculties of thought—and which is designated by the Critique as “thing-in-itself.” In this sense the doctrine of phenomena may be called the Kantian *Idealism*, the doctrine of things-in-themselves the Kantian *Realism*.

II. THE THING-IN-ITSELF AS WILL.

1. *Intelligible Causality.*

Kant regards things-in-themselves as the supersensible substratum of our knowing reason and sense-world, as the matter-giving principle, or as the cause of our sensations. He ascribes to them, accordingly, a *causality* which is to be taken in an entirely different sense from that category of cause which determines the succession of phenomena in time, and thereby both renders our experience possible and creates it, but which also, precisely on that account, has validity only within the latter. This notion is a rule of the understanding, which may only be applied to phenomena, hence not to things-in-themselves. Kant knew this, and taught it. One must not assume that such a thinker has entangled himself in his own doctrines in so clumsy and apparent a manner as composedly to apply to things-in-themselves the very *same* notion which he had shown to be invalid for them. Kant distinguishes two sorts of causality which are inherently and essentially unlike: “the conditioned or sensible” and “the unconditioned or intelligible.” The former is valid only for phenomena, the succession of which in time is determined and constituted by it alone; the latter is not valid for phenomena, and is independent of all time. Now, things-in-themselves are timeless and causal; hence their causality is the unconditioned and intelligible, which, according to Kant’s doctrine, consists in *Freedom* or in pure will, and this constitutes the moral principle of the world.

2. *The Moral Order of the World.*

There is still another world than the sensible and time-world, namely, an intelligible world, which is completely independent of

the former—a world which must not be sought after and thought of as an heavenly world of spirits existing somewhere beyond our common experience, yet of necessity still in space and time—this would be the way to Swedenborg's Mysticism—but a world which we recognize as the *moral world*, that in which the laws of freedom find their recognition and fulfilment. The intelligible world is the *World as Will*, the sensible world is the *World as Idea* (*Vorstellung*); the former is related to the latter as thing-in-itself to phenomena; in other words, it *is* the thing-in-itself, and lies at the base of the sense-world; hence it is independent of the latter, while this is dependent upon it. But just as the sensible world is related to the intelligible, so our faculty of knowledge must be related to the will, or, what is the same thing, our theoretical to our practical reason; the latter is independent of the former, while the former is dependent upon the latter. Herewith is that relation determined which Kant called "*the Primacy of Practical Reason*." He saw himself obliged to hold the reality and causality of things-in-themselves, and to identify the latter, as intelligible causality, with freedom or pure will, and thus to teach the primacy of practical reason. In other words, the true or real principle of the world is, according to Kant, not knowing reason, but will.

The goal of our will is, according to the law of freedom, the *purity* of volition. This goal is to be striven for and attained; the endeavor finds its expression in the purification of the will, which constitutes the real ground-theme of the moral world. Since now without the sense-world no sensuous motives or appetites could be operative in us, hence no material of purification given, this itself consequently aimless and superfluous, it becomes clear that the entire sense-world, unobstructed as to its own laws, constitutes a necessary member and an integral part of the moral world; that it is compassed and swayed by the latter; and that the laws of nature are subordinate to the laws of freedom, although they are thereby in no way suspended or annulled. As thus understood, our sensible life acquires a moral meaning, and becomes a *moral phenomenon*, in which a definite disposition—*i. e.*, the will in a definite state of purity or impurity—reveals and manifests itself. The constancy of this disposition makes our moral conduct seem necessitated, *i. e.*, as the consequence of our given empirical

character. But since it is the *disposition*, or tendency of the will, which appears in our empirical character and forms its principle, the latter must be a *phenomenon of will*, or a *willed* phenomenon—*i. e.*, a phenomenon of the intelligible character or of freedom. Here we see how Kant's doctrine of intelligible and empirical character necessarily follows from his doctrine of freedom and purification. Without the ideality of time and space there is no possibility of a sense-world, but also no possibility of freedom. Without a sense-world and freedom there is no necessity for the purification of the will, no moral phenomena of a sensible and empirical sort, hence no empirical character as a manifestation of the intelligible, and no community of freedom and necessity in the conduct and characters of men. Because Kant first made this unity of freedom and necessity intelligible, Schopenhauer was led to call it "the greatest of all the contributions of human thought." And since the way to this insight could be won *only* through the doctrine of space and time, the same writer extolled the "Transcendental Æsthetic" and the doctrine of intelligible and empirical character as "the two diamonds in the crown of Kantian fame."

III. THE DOCTRINE OF GOD AND IMMORTALITY.

1. *Kantian Theism.*

The Idea and import of the moral order of the world comprehends in itself the question regarding the original ground of the same, as also that regarding the attainability of its highest end, namely, the purity of the will. The moral author of the world is *God*, and the purity of the will, or moral perfection, is not to be attainable in a temporal, but only in an *eternal* life—*i. e.*, through the immortality of the soul. According to Kant, the Ideas of Freedom, God, and Immortality go hand in hand. In the "Critique of Pure Reason" they are merely Ideas (*Ideen*), but in the "Critique of Practical Reason" they have the value of realities; and, indeed, it is only through the reality of freedom and the moral order of the world that the other two Ideas also are realized or made morally certain. It is utterly impossible, from the point of view of the sense-world, to comprehend and demonstrate the existence of freedom, God, and immortality. Indeed, all proofs directed to that end with the means furnished by our theoretical

reason must necessarily fail. Critical inquiry reveals the fact that these objects are incapable of demonstration, while at the same time it leaves the question of their reality untouched. Now, the doctrine of the ideality of time and space, and of the sense-world, has already established the possibility of freedom. But since time is purely our idea, we can distinguish ourselves from it, and must do so. There is, then, something in us which is independent of all time: this timeless something is freedom; and as it is the only condition under which the fact of our moral self-consciousness and the activity of the moral law within us can take place, not only the possibility, but the actuality of freedom is to be affirmed. The moral order of the world consists in the fulfilment of the laws of freedom. Without this moral order they would remain empty; they would not be *laws*, and freedom itself would be a mere fancy. There follows, from the moral order of the world, to which the sensible must be subordinate, the reality of the moral ground of the world (God), and the attainability of the moral end of the world, which includes in itself the perfection of the will, and therefore immortality. These are the so-called moral arguments with which Kant sought to demonstrate, through freedom, the primacy of practical reason and the necessary fulfilment of its postulates—the existence of God and the immortality of the soul.

These moral proofs have won for Kant many adherents, on account of their religious importance and the ease with which they are comprehended; but, owing to their apparent inconsistency with the results of the first “Critique,” they have found antagonists as well, who have made them the subject now of honest criticism, now of ridicule. It has been asserted that Kant sought in the “Critique of Practical Reason,” but with weak arguments, to raise up again as a makeshift for weak souls what he had already destroyed, and with conclusive argument, in the “Critique of Pure Reason.” Among the writers on the Critical philosophy, Schopenhauer, in particular, is the representative of this view, and the most pronounced opponent of Kantian theism.

The doctrine of freedom and the absolute supremacy of the moral order of the world, or the doctrine of the primacy of practical reason, rests with Kant upon firm ground. The moral proof for the existence of God stands or falls with this doctrine. Re-

garding the *theoretical* demonstrability of the latter, Kant held different views at different stages of his philosophical inquiry. In his pre-critical period he sought to transform these demonstrations and to re-establish them; in the "Critique of Pure Reason" he not only denied, but refuted them, or demonstrated their impossibility; and in the "Critique of Practical Reason," as well as in that of "Theological Judgment," he neither abandons nor modifies this last position, but, in perfect agreement with it, deduces—using the well-known and evident arguments—from the necessity of the moral order of the world, the necessity of the moral ground of the world, or the existence of God. Accordingly, in what concerns the question of the *demonstrability* of the divine existence, we find no contradiction in the different views of Kant, but a logically consistent advance. But, however differently he may have thought on this point—namely, the *knowableness* of God—there was not a moment in the course of the development of his philosophical convictions when he denied, or even only doubted, the *reality* of God. And there is still a second and a third point which remained unquestionably certain to him, and even at the time of his most skeptical tendency, when he ridiculed Swedenborg's dreams of a spirit-world and of our intercourse with it: I mean his conviction that morality is *independent* of every sort of scientific knowledge, as well as of every doubt that may shake the latter; and that the spiritual world as well as spiritual intercourse consists merely in a *moral* community, or in the moral order of the world.¹

2. *The Kantian Doctrine of Immortality.*

On the other hand, the way in which the *summum bonum* is conceived in the "Critique of Practical Reason"—the notion of it being produced with the aid of the Ideas of God and immortality—involves a series of difficult and doubtful considerations. And it will be advisable, in order to win a correct apprehension of the matter, that we take up our criticism of this doctrine of Kant's along with its characterization. For, since the Critical philosophy sees itself necessitated from the standpoint of its entirely new view of the world to affirm immortality, it is all-important that this affirmation be properly understood.

¹ Cf. K. Fischer: "Gesch. d. n. Philos.," vol. iii, pp. 229, 230, 252-254, 264, 265.

The *summum bonum* is recognized by Kant as the unification of virtue and happiness; as that state of blessedness which is merited by our worthiness, and appointed us by the justice of God. It is because the purity of the will must be attained, and yet cannot be attained in this our present life, that the "Critique of Practical Reason" postulates a future life—*i. e.*, the continuance and permanence of our personal existence, or the immortality of the soul. We will test this conception of the matter exactly according to the canons which the Critical philosophy prescribes for us.

In the first place, it is not at all clear why purity of disposition should be absolutely unattainable during our earthly existence. In reality, Kant has himself contradicted this assertion in his doctrine of religion. For he there exempts from these conditions not merely the ideal Saviour, but the Saviour in the actuality of the Person Jesus, expressly declaring that his example would not be practical and effectual if this purity should be either denied Him or ascribed to Him as a supernatural, miraculous power.¹ Hence the proposition that the goal of our moral perfection can be attained *only* in a future and eternal life does not stand proof.

This objection aside, it is further not evident in what respect the *permanence* of our existence is to help the matter. Permanence, like duration in general, is a time-determination, and as such it falls within time and the sense-world. If now moral perfection is not attainable in the present sense-world, owing to the temporal and sensible nature of our existence, then it will remain unattainable in the future sense-world, since the conditions of its impossibility are in no way removed. The eternal life must be distinguished from the temporal; even endless existence is not to be regarded as eternal life. And it is much to be regretted that Kant in his doctrine of immortality did *not* make this distinction. He demands "an *existence* and personality of the same rational being enduring to *infinity*."

But if immortality is recognized as continued existence or *future* life, we must ask: *How* can our personality still continue within time and the sense-world after our bodily existence has ceased? By a second earthly birth (transmigration of souls), or by removal

¹ Cf. K. Fischer: "Gesch. d. n. Philos.," vol. iv, pp. 309, 310, 321, 322.

to another, perhaps less dense, planet, as Jupiter, say—what Kant himself in earlier life held to be possible¹—or by wandering through the starry heavens, or how else? Such questions present themselves, and yet they admit of no answer, or only a fanciful one; so that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, considered as a *lasting duration* of our personal existence in time and in the sense-world, is degraded from a postulate of practical reason to an object of imagination and phantasy.

According to the demands of practical reason, our worthiness is to be the cause of our happiness, our purity that of our salvation. If we have attained the first, we have merited the second, and receive it from the hand of God. Now, we fail to see what sort of happiness that does not follow of itself from purity is still to be added. Self-denial is complete, all motives of self-love and self-seeking are subdued, and thus all the evils which make us unhappy have vanished. The pangs of an evil conscience have given place to the peace of a good one. If this blessedness still lacks anything, it can only be the fulness of *outward* goods, as compensation for the outward evils suffered—it seeming, perhaps, that, after achieving the heaven of a good conscience, we ought also, speaking in figure, to revel in Abraham's bosom! It is not clear with what right Kant, who in his doctrine of morals maintained and emphatically insisted upon the most rigid and even painful separation of morality and happiness, now demands, in order to the production of the *summum bonum*, the necessary unification of the two under the constant presupposition of their *fundamentally different* origin. Morality follows from the pure will, striving for happiness from the empirical will or self-love, which desires everything that promotes its well-being. Is, then, striving for future and eternal happiness less eudæmonistic, less covetous and selfish, than striving for present happiness? Kant's teaching says: Seek before everything purity of disposition, and happiness will fall to you of itself in virtue of divine justice. You may not desire and demand happiness, but you may, indeed, *hope* for it. As though this hope were not, too, a silent expectancy, covetousness, and requisition! With such a hope we are much like the polite servants, who demand nothing, even assure you they will take nothing, yet at the same time furtively open the hand.

¹ Cf. Fischer: "Gesch. d. n. Philos.," vol. iii, p. 148.

All these weak points in the Kantian doctrine of immortality, as they present themselves to us in the postulates of practical reason, may be traced to *one* fundamental error. The *πρώτου ψεύδος* lies in the fact that divine justice is apprehended after the standard of *temporal* justice, and made to consist in *retribution*. Accordingly, the disproportion between virtue and happiness in our present life demands an equalization which can and should be first realized in a future state. Kant established penal justice, the administration of which belongs to the power of the state, on the notion of the necessity of retribution. On the same notion he now founds a reward-dispensing justice, the perfect and infallible administration of which is only possible through God, and first exercised in the life beyond. He thus degrades eternal life to a future life, immortality to a mere permanence of personality, makes purity tantamount to a goal which is absolutely unattainable in the present, and the moral life to a series of states of perfection with which the states of recompense go hand in hand. Following this view, it must be demanded, as Emil Arnoldt has already aptly remarked,¹ that the degree of happiness be adapted and proportioned to the moral quality of our will, hence that the impurity of the will be accompanied with the corresponding punishments. And, as a will not completely purified has still the character of impurity, divine justice would be compelled to exercise its office of retribution in the other world chiefly by inflicting greater or less penalties, which would be appointed as according to the greater or less degree of our impurity. In this way we find ourselves in the midst of the labyrinth of the Platonic doctrines of immortality and retribution, while following the threads of the Kantian.

It is further not evident why, in our present life, the justice of God as granting rewards, and in the future life as inflicting penalties, should in each case cease or be suspended, which we are led to infer, since Kant as good as does not mention the latter in his doctrine of immortality. Why are the countless incongruities between virtue and happiness permitted even in this world? If they actually are, indeed, the incongruities which they seem to us to be! If they are not, as the omnipresence and justice of God compel us to believe, then also the conditions disappear under which divine

¹ E. Arnoldt: "Ueber Kant's Ideen vom höchsten Gut." (Königsberg, 1874), pp. 7-13.

justice is first in a *future* life to assume the office and character of an equalizing retribution.

Kant wanted to harmonize his new doctrine of freedom with the old doctrine of immortality and of retribution in a future world, and he sought to do this by recognizing and defending the latter as a necessary postulate of the former. This attempt must necessarily have failed, and, indeed, have been frustrated by the principles of the Critical philosophy itself. If the activity of God remains for us an unsearchable mystery, as Kant taught and must have taught, then he could not consistently have attempted to unveil the *mode of activity* of the divine justice, and have sought to determine it according to a standard that is subject to the conditions of time. And even saying nothing of the fact that he unjustifiably apprehended this mode of activity as retribution, and permitted it to appear as something comprehensible, he still was not justified in representing this divine retribution as inoperative in the present temporal state, and as first to be looked for in the future life.

Our aim is to judge the Kantian doctrine of immortality according to the fundamental canons of the Critical philosophy, and we desire, therefore, to amend it in agreement with them, not to reject it altogether. For we certainly appreciate that the new doctrine of freedom radically changes the doctrine of immortality also, and that the latter enters through Transcendental Idealism a new stadium of *affirmation*. Now, the apprehension as well as the determination of the problem of immortality depends upon the question whether we, with all that constitutes our being, are in time and space, or these in us. If time and space are the all-comprehensive, fundamental conditions of all existence, so that nothing can be independent of them, then it is matter alone which persists, while its forms change; then all particular things must originate and pass away; then no single being, no individual, hence also no person, can perpetually endure; on the contrary, each one has a definite duration in time which is so bound up with his being that the limits of this duration are the insurmountable limits of personal existence. Under this presupposition, according to which time and space are things, or determinations of *things-in-themselves*, there remains nothing further for us than either, in agreement with the above assumption, to deny every sort of individual (per-

sonal) immortality, or, in contradiction with it, to affirm and conceive of the latter in a wholly fanciful manner, merely to satisfy certain needs of the inner nature. All origination and decay takes place in time, and is only possible in time. Whatever is independent of all time, or has the character of timeless being, can neither originate nor pass away: this alone is *eternal*. Since now time as such is no thing-in-itself, but only the necessary form of thought, all things in time are ideas or phenomena, which depend for their existence upon a being to whom they appear, or who conceives and knows them. This being, however, since it constitutes the condition of all phenomena, is itself no phenomenon; it is not in time, but time in it; hence it is independent of all time—*i. e.*, timeless, or *eternal*. It is impossible that certain phenomena should originate, and then, instead of passing away, continue to exist *ad infinitum*. It is just as impossible that certain phenomena should pass away, and yet, instead of actually perishing, continue to exist in time and the sense-world in some secret manner. Yet this is the way in which the immortality of the human soul is commonly conceived—namely, the perishableness of human existence in time is at once affirmed and denied, and death thus regarded in reality as a mere formality.

The true notion of immortality coincides with that of *eternity*. Such immortality the Critical philosophy affirms and establishes through its new doctrines of time and space, of the ideality of our sense-world, and of the reality of that supersensible substratum which lies at the basis of our theoretical reason and its phenomena, and which Kant called “thing-in-itself” and exhibited as the principle of the moral order of the world. Now, just as all objects of sense are throughout phenomenal, so also our sense-life has the character of a pure phenomenon; and just as the entire sense-world is the manifestation of the intelligible or moral order of the world, so the empirical character of man is the manifestation of his intelligible character; that is temporal and transitory, this timeless and eternal. The eternity of our intelligible being must, like freedom, be affirmed, although immortality, as thus truly apprehended, cannot be represented to the mind, or drawn in the imagination, since to conceive it, or to fashion it pictorially, means to make it temporal, and therewith to deny it altogether. Since without sensuous ideas there are no knowable objects, the immor-

talities of the soul can never be theoretically demonstrated. But since all sensuous ideas stand under the condition of time, which is itself merely the form of our thought, our being is timeless or eternal, and the immortality of the soul can never be refuted; all proofs directed against the doctrine are just as futile as the *theoretical* arguments for it. On either side, the reality of time, and what is really tantamount to the mortality of our being, are first falsely assumed; and then the one, in order to establish the immortality of the soul, demonstrates its immateriality and indestructibility, while the other, in order to refute the same proposition, proves the soul's materiality and perishability. Invalid proofs may be confuted by showing their impossibility, but they cannot be nullified by demonstrating the opposite position with proofs which are equally invalid. Hence opponents are not to be driven out of the field by demonstrations of immortality. But one may, indeed, and without overstepping the bounds of a proper use of reason, oppose to them an *hypothesis* which they cannot refute, and which itself makes no claim to be theoretically demonstrable. *The Doctrine of Methods* in the "Critique of Reason" contains, in its section on the "Discipline of Pure Reason in reference to Hypotheses," a most noteworthy and characteristic passage, in which Kant commends to his adherents the doctrine of immortality in just such an hypothetical form, in order that they may make use of it in opposing their antagonists. "If, then," he says, "as opposing itself to the (in any other, not speculative reference) assumed nature of the soul, as being something immaterial and not subject to bodily transformations, you should meet with the difficulty of the argument, that experience, nevertheless, seems to show that both the increased capacity and the derangement of our mental powers are merely different modifications of our organs, you can weaken the force of this proof by assuming that our bodies are nothing but the *fundamental phenomenon*, to which as condition the entire faculty of sense, and herewith all thought, refers itself in the present state (life). The separation from the body would then be the end of this sensible use of your faculty of knowledge, and the beginning of the intellectual. The body would consequently not be the cause of thought, but merely an impeding condition of it, and hence to be regarded, indeed, as a furthering of sensible and animal life, but yet just in such meas-

ure as also an hindrance to pure, spiritual life. Thus the dependence of the animal life upon the bodily constitution proves nothing as to the dependence of the mental life upon the state of our organs. But you might go even farther and trace out some new query, which has been as yet either unsuggested or not sufficiently pursued. The fortuity of generation, for example—depending, as it does, with man as well as with the non-rational creatures, upon circumstance, and even upon sustenance, upon management, its humors and caprices, and often indeed upon vice—throws a great difficulty in the way of the notion of the lasting existence of a creature whose life began under such trifling and contingent circumstances. This difficulty, however, has little to do with the question of the permanence (here upon earth) of the whole race, since the contingency in individual cases is nevertheless on that account subject to general rule. But to expect in reference to every individual such a far-reaching effect from so insignificant conditions, seems certainly questionable. But in opposition to this query you could offer a transcendental hypothesis, that all life is strictly only intelligible; that it is not subject to time-mutations; that it neither has a beginning in birth, nor will find an end in death; *that this life is nothing but a pure phenomenon*—i. e., a sensuous idea of the pure, spiritual life; that the entire sense-world is merely an image, which hovers before us on account of our present faculty of knowledge, and which, like a dream, has no objective reality in itself; that if we were to perceive things and ourselves as they *are*, we should see ourselves in a world of spiritual natures, our only true intercourse with which neither began at birth, nor will cease with the death of the body (as mere phenomenon). Now, although we do not *know* the least thing of all this which we here offer as a defence against our opponents, nor even maintain it in earnest—it is all by no means an Idea of the reason, but merely a notion thought out as a weapon of defence—we are, nevertheless, proceeding in strict accordance with reason, since we only show the opponent, who thinks to have exhausted all the possibilities of the matter by erroneously declaring that the want of its empirical conditions is a proof of the perfect impossible of what is believed by us, that he can just as little span, by the mere laws of experience, the entire field of possible things considered in themselves as we outside of experience can

achieve anything in a well-founded way for our reason. Whoever resorts to such hypothetical remedies for the assumptions of an over-confident disputant must not be held responsible for them, as if they were his own real opinions. He abandons them as soon as he has silenced the dogmatic presumption of his antagonist. For, however modest and moderate it certainly is, when one merely objects to or disagrees with the views of another, it always becomes, just as soon as one would have his objections recognized as proofs of the opposite, a no less arrogant and presuming claim than if he had made a direct attack upon the position of the affirmative party."¹

It will not be difficult to determine in this hypothesis regarding immortality what is to be ascribed to the *theoretical* mode of conception and the method of Kant, and what to be regarded as his own most inward conviction. Conviction it plainly is—based upon the new doctrine of the ideality of time and the sense-world—that our sense-life has the character of a mere *phenomenon*, and that our intelligible being is independent of all time, hence timeless and free, eternal and immortal. If the sense-world were nothing but a dream that floated before us, or a scene which we contemplated like a theatrical performance, then it is self-evident that we should survive this passive state of imagination; for the end of the dream is not that of the dreamer, nor the end of the play that of the spectator. But the matter is not so simple. We are not only perceptive of the sense-world, but active in it; not merely spectators in the world's theatre, but actors as well. In other words, the world has no place for spectators but the stage; this is the scene where we live and act, where we appear as performers, and at the same time contemplate and recognize our own performance. Here, accordingly, actor and spectator are in so far one that, when the looker-on ceases to be a performer, he also ceases to be a looker-on. With our existence in the sense-world, our contemplation of things, and even the appearance of things, vanishes. With our sense-life our sensuous thought perishes, and together with it that knowledge the ground-forms of which are space and time. Corresponding to our timeless being there is the state of timeless knowing, or of that intellectual perception which

¹ Kant: "Kr. d. r. Vernunft. Methodenlehre," Part I, sec. 3. (Werke, vol. ii, pp. 583-585.) Cf. Fischer: "Gesch. d. n. Philos.," vol. iii, pp. 530, 531.

has immediate knowledge of the inner nature of things. It is this organ of knowledge which Kant means when, in the passage cited above, he sanctions the assertion that "our body is nothing but the fundamental phenomenon, to which, as condition, the entire faculty of sense, and herewith all thinking, relates itself in the present state"; that "the separation from the body is the end of the sensible use of our faculty of knowledge and the beginning of the intellectual"; and that, "If we were to perceive ourselves and things as they are, we should see ourselves in a world of spiritual natures." If, now, timeless knowing can belong, as Kant elsewhere teaches,¹ only to the Primitive Being, then the end of our sensible existence is to be regarded as a return to God, and our eternal or purely spiritual life as a life in God. With sensuous thought all sensuous appetites must have disappeared, and thereby that need of purification, on account of which Kant in his practical doctrine of immortality demanded the endless duration of our personal existence. Then purity would not constitute the problem and goal, but the condition and character of immortal life. Schopenhauer rejects, along with the Kantian theism, the doctrine of immortality which is expounded in the "Critique of Practical Reason" as coinciding with the doctrine of retribution. He affirms the immortality of our being on the ground of the "Transcendental Æsthetic." He says: "Would one demand, as has so often happened, the permanence of individual consciousness, in order to couple with it reward or punishment in a future world, it would in fact only be a question of the compatibility of virtue and selfishness. But these two will never embrace each other; they are diametrical opposites." "The adequate answer to the question of the permanence of the individual after death lies in Kant's great doctrine of the *ideality of time*, which proves itself just here especially fruitful, since, by a thoroughly theoretical, yet well elucidated insight, it makes compensation for dogmas, which lead on the one hand as well as on the other to absurdities, and thus at a stroke does away with the most prolific of all metaphysical questions. Beginning, end, permanence, are notions which borrow their significance solely from time, and consequently are valid only under the presupposition of the latter. But

¹ Cf. *supra*, The Thing-in-itself.

time has no absolute existence, nor is it the sort or mode of being *per se* of things, but merely the form of our *knowledge* of our own existence and of that of all things; and precisely on that account it is very incomplete, and limited to mere phenomena.”²

Since, now, it is absolutely impossible for our reason as at present constituted to form for itself an idea of the state of timeless being and knowing, we must conclude that we cannot know anything in the least of the life after death. It is desirable to note, therefore, that Kant expressly declares that his hypothesis is not intended to defend the dogma of immortality, but only to combat the opponents of the dogma. Yet it remains very noteworthy that Kant chose, as best illustrating the “hypotheses of pure reason” which he permitted and justified for polemical use, precisely this doctrine—the doctrine, namely, which exhibits our present existence as a mere phenomenon or sensuous idea of our eternal and intelligible life. If we compare the Kantian doctrine of immortality as expressed in this hypothesis of pure reason with the same doctrine as a postulate of the practical reason, we see that eternal life is there conceived as timeless, supersensible, and purely spiritual; here, on the contrary, as temporal, hence sensible, and needing purification; there it is regarded as completion, which we are to conceive as a life in God; here, on the other hand, as an endless process of moral purification, subject to divine retribution. According to the first conception, our eternal life is independent of time and space. What is called the state of the soul after death is, for our present faculty of knowledge, *mysterium magnum*. And “the tiresome query: *When? Where? and How?*” is herewith forever silenced, since it is now senseless and absurd, seeking timeless and spaceless existence in time and space. But, according to the second conception, the soul is to continue its existence after death, is to experience a series of progressive states of purification, hence is to live on in time and the sense-world; at a definite period of time it must leave the body, seek a new place of abode, take on a new form of life; and since all this can only take place in space and time, in the every-day world about us might it not seem that, with ordinary sagacity, we ought to be able to detect its hidden way? The *knowledge* that the great Beyond must ever re-

² A. Schopenhauer: “Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung,” vol. ii, fifth edition, p 564. Cf. his “Parerga and Paralipomena,” vol. ii, fourth edition, § 137.

main an unfathomable mystery to us is now no longer our possession, and we stand helpless, like Mephistopheles before the corpse of Faust:

“Und wenn ich Tag und Stunden mich zerplage,
Wann? Wie? und Wo? das ist die leidige Frage.”¹

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PESSIMISM.

BY ELLEN M. MITCHELL.

Never was the question, Is life worth living? discussed from such various standpoints as at the present time. It is not a new question, but the repetition of an old one, transferred from the Orient to this Western world. There have been pessimists always, but pessimism was never placed on a metaphysical basis, and formulated into a system of philosophy, until this century. A pessimistic strain may be found in the literature of all ages—from the complaints of Job and the words of the preacher in Ecclesiastes to the pathetic melancholy of Shelley and Byron, of Heine and Lamartine, and of the Italian Leopardi. But it is a part of the poet's endowment to feel deeply the sadder words of humanity, and to give them fitting and powerful expression. The evil which he recognizes is subjective rather than objective, a shadow falling athwart the sunshine of life, not the substance out of which it is made.

Pessimism, as a philosophic doctrine, is something different from this; it not only accepts evil as a fact, but seeks to explain its genesis and devise a scheme for its annihilation. Schopenhauer is its chief exponent in modern times, and nothing is more wonderful, as M. Caro has said, than this renaissance of Buddhistic pessimism in the heart of Prussia. That three hundred millions of Asiatics should drink, in long draughts, the opium of these fatal doctrines which enervate and stupefy the will, is extraordinary enough. But that an energetic, disciplined race, so strongly con-

¹ “And though I fret and worry till I'm weary,
When? How? and Where? remains the fatal query.”

TAYLOR'S *Translation*.—FAUST, Part II, Act V, Scene VI.